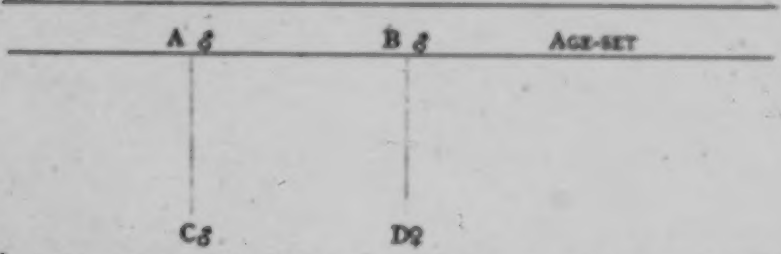
9:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936)1936 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

goat, and Tot gave the husband's father a male sheep. It may be doubted, nevertheless, whether such a marriage would have been regarded as correct by the older generation. I was told, however, that a man would not hesitate to flirt with, or make love to, female children of his father's age-mates without intention of marrying them, and it is evident that the restriction has nothing like the same force as that on the marriage between men and the daughters of their age-mates.

DIAGRAM XXIV.



To understand the Nuer age-set system we have to observe how it regulates the behaviour of members of a community towards one another. It acts together with the kinship system in determining everybody's attitude towards everybody else, so that the behaviour of each to each other is known beforehand, since it is evoked by their status in relation to one another. We have already seen how by a fiction which recognises adoption as true kinship and by the value attached to descent through the mother as well as through the father, a Nuer community comprises a network of interrelations of a kinship type which are spoken about in genealogical terms. These, however, leave authoritarian status largely ill-defined, and as is usual in societies where rank is unknown leadership is based on social recognition of biological differences of sex and age. In Nuerland authority is in the hands of the males and older males.

So dominant are notions of kinship among the Nuer that the age-set system is expressed in the ideology of family and kin as we have observed and tends to be spoken of as "fathers," "brother," "sons." Doubtless, this association lends weight to the institution of age-sets and makes them easy for an individual to understand and take part in. Talking to Nuer about their age-sets, one receives a marked impression that the notions associated with them are the familiar notions of family